



**Tips and Tidbits**  
**Issue #: 7-2011**



**13 July 2011**

**Question: What is the difference between a reassignment and realignment?**

Reassignment and realignment are very different personnel actions, each with its own requirements and documentation stipulations.

A reassignment occurs when an employee is permanently moved to another position of the same/equivalent grade for which that employee is qualified and may be accomplished as either a noncompetitive\* or a competitive action. To be processed noncompetitively, the employee must have already competed for and currently hold or have held the equivalent grade of the position to which being reassigned. On the other hand, reassignments to positions [where the [targeted] grade level is] above the grade level currently or previously held by the employee are processed competitively. This means that all merit promotion rules apply and competition must occur between all merit promotion candidates within the area of consideration.

All reassignments, whether competitive or noncompetitive, initiated by way of a Request for Personnel Action (RPA) with the final action documented on a Notice of Personnel Action (NPA), can occur within a [local] activity, across activities on the same installation, within the same Agency component at different geographical locations, or even across different Agencies located at different installations.

A reassignment may be “management directed” or “employee initiated.” Management directed reassignments are, as the name implies, directed by management and normally occur when an employee’s skills can be better utilized in another equivalent position or in order to avoid reduction in force actions. Conversely, employee initiated reassignments occur at the request of the employee and if effected noncompetitively, require management’s approval.

A reassignment within the Legacy System (i.e. General Schedule) never results in a change to the employee's salary\*\*. Employees carry their existing rate of pay from one position to another when reassigned.

A realignment is the movement of an employee AND the employee’s position when:

- An organization change (such as a reorganization or transfer of function) occurs,
- The employee stays in the same agency, and
- There is no change in the employee’s position description, grade, or pay (including locality pay).

Whether processed individually for one or a few employees or processed for an entire organization, realignments are documented via a NPA. In the former scenario, management submits the appropriate number of RPAs; in the latter, a mass realignment would be executed based management's submission of a spreadsheet along with supporting documentation (i.e. authorization memorandum, permanent orders, etc).

For additional information on reassignments and realignments, please contact your servicing Human Resources (HR) Specialist.

\* For additional information on noncompetitive placement(s), please refer to the Tips and Tidbits Article #4-2008.

\*\* Employees in some Commands are still operating under the auspices of the National Security Personnel System (NSPS). Accordingly, dependent upon management's prerogative, reassignment *could* result in a salary increase.

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